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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/723,715	11/25/2003	Tetsuya Ishikawa	03706/LH	9794
1933	7590	11/01/2007	EXAMINER	
FRISHAUF, HOLTZ, GOODMAN & CHICK, PC			PHAM, THIERRY L	
220 Fifth Avenue			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/723,715	ISHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner Thierry L. Pham	Art Unit 2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 November 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 25 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/22/04, 7/18/07.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

- This action is responsive to the following communication: Nonprovisional application filed on 12/25/03.
- Claims 1-13 are currently pending.

Specification

The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 3/22/04 and 7/18/07 was in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "image data" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The examiner is unclear whether "image" as cited in line 2 and "image data" as cited in line 6 are directed to the same meaning. The examiner herein interprets "image data" as data extracted and/or scanned from a document. Clarification from the applicants is herein required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka (US Pub. No. 20020003897A1).

Regarding claim 1, Tanaka discloses an apparatus (digital copy machine 100, fig. 1) for processing image data, comprising:

- an image-reading section (scanner engine 3, fig. 1) to read an image on a document;
- a network interface (communication interface 15, fig. 1) to couple said apparatus to a network (communication interface 15 is implemented to connect to network 200 as shown in fig. 17); and
- a rasterizer (rasterizer 9, fig. 1) to rasterize said image data so as to output rasterized image data (par. 43); wherein
- said image data are scanner data (scanner data, par. 10 using scanner engine 11, fig. 1) acquired by reading said image on said document by means of a scanner included in said image-reading section, or PDL data inputted through said network interface coupled to said network.

Regarding claim 2, Tanaka further discloses the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising: a general-purpose image format converting section (vector conversion unit 23, fig. 1) to convert said scanner data or said PDL data to data of a same general-purpose image format (converts scanned image data into vector data, par. 41).

Regarding claim 3, Tanaka further discloses the apparatus of claim 2, further comprising: a data storage section (memory 13, fig. 1, par. 46) to store said data of said general-purpose image format, converted by said general-purpose image format converting section.

Regarding claim 4, Tanaka further discloses a system for processing an image through a network, comprising:

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- an image-processing apparatus (digital copy machine 100, fig. 1) that includes:
 - an image-reading section (scanner engine 3, fig. 1) to read an image on a document;
 - a first network interface (communication interface 15, fig. 1) to couple said image-processing apparatus to said network (communication interface 15 is implemented to connect to network 200 as shown in fig. 17); and
 - a general-purpose image format (vector conversion unit 23, fig. 1) converting section to convert scanner data (scanner data, par. 10 using scanner engine 11, fig. 1), acquired by reading said image on said document by means of a scanner included in said image-reading section, or PDL data, inputted through said network interface coupled to said network, to data of a same general-purpose image format (par. 43); and
- an information-processing apparatus (external personal computer, which can be connected to the copy machine via communication interface 15, par. 148-149) that includes:
 - a second network (external ports such as USB, IEEE1394, and etc allows personal computer to connect to the network 200, fig. 17) interface to couple said information-processing apparatus to said network; and
 - a display section (inherently, all personal computer includes display unit allowing users to view document contents and etc) to display a reproduced image based on said data of said general-purpose image format.

Regarding claim 5, Tanaka further discloses the system of claim 4, further comprising: an image-printing apparatus (printer 220, fig. 17) that includes: a third network interface (network interface allows the printer to connect to the network 200, fig. 17) to couple said image-printing apparatus to said network; and a printing section (printer 220, fig. 17) to print a reproduced image based on said data of said general-purpose image format.

Regarding claim 6, Tanaka further discloses the system of claim 5, further comprising: a data-storing apparatus (server 500, fig. 20) that includes: a fourth network interface (network port of server 500 that allows the server to connect to the network 200, fig. 20) to couple said data-storing apparatus to said network; and a data storage section (server 500, fig. 20) to store

said data of said general-purpose image format, converted by said general-purpose image format converting section included in said image-processing apparatus.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (US 20020003897) and in view of Idehara (US 20010052995).

Regarding claim 7, Tanaka discloses a system (image processing system comprising copy machine, printer, scanner, and personal computer, figs. 16-17, par. 143) for processing an image through a network (network 200, fig. 17), comprising:

- an image-processing apparatus (digital copy machine 100, fig. 1) that are coupled to said network (communication interface 15 is implemented to connect to network 200 as shown in fig. 17), and each of which includes a rasterizer (rasterizer 9, fig. 1) to rasterize image data, representing said image, so as to output rasterized image data;
- an image-printing apparatus (printer 220, fig. 17) that is coupled to said network, and that includes an image-forming section (inherently, printer 220 includes a print engine for forming images onto print media) to form a reproduced image on a sheet and is coupled to said image-processing apparatus through said network.

However, Tanaka fails to teach and/or suggest a system having plurality of image-processing apparatuses and a grouping section to group said plurality of image-processing apparatuses into at least one group including at least one of said plurality of image-processing apparatuses. In other words, Tanaka's system only teaches a single copy machine 100 and a single printer 220 are connected to the network rather than plurality of printers and copiers are connected to the network as claimed in claim 7.

Idehara, in the same field of endeavor for image processing system, teaches a well-known example of wherein a plurality of copy machines (copiers), plurality of printers, plurality of host computers, scanners, and other network devices are connected to a single network (fig. 16). Tanaka also teaches a well-known example of a grouping section to group said plurality of image-processing apparatuses into at least one group including at least one of said plurality of image-processing apparatuses (grouping plurality of apparatuses, fig. 21, par. 140 and see features in claim 26).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify network of Tanaka to allow plurality of printers, copiers (image processing apparatuses), host computers, scanners, and a group section to connect to a single network as taught by Idehara enables users/operators to select different and/or substitute device (e.g. printer) if the selected device has been jammed or failed to operate (see figs. 40-42 of Idehara).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Tanaka with Idehara to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 8, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 7, wherein an image-processing apparatus, being one of said plurality of image-processing apparatuses, includes a group information storing section to store group information including access restricting information (access information, for example, Mr. A has access to printer A, fig. 32, par. 165), serving (server 10, fig. 24) as access restriction established between an apparatus included in a group to which said image-processing apparatus belongs and another apparatus included in another group.

Regarding claim 9, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 8, wherein said access restricting information also serves as access restriction established between an apparatus and another apparatus (input, output selection, fig. 52-53), both arbitrarily extracted from apparatuses coupled to said network irrespective of groups grouped by said grouping section (grouping, fig. 32).

Regarding claim 10, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 7, wherein said image-printing apparatus includes a group information storing section to store group information including access restricting information (access information, for example, Mr. A has access to printer A, fig. 32, par. 165), serving (server 10, fig. 24) as access restriction established between an apparatus included in a group to which said image-printing apparatus belongs and another apparatus included in another group.

Regarding claim 11, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 10, wherein said access restricting information also serves as access restriction established between an apparatus and another apparatus (input, output selection, fig. 52-53, also notes that copy machine A can be accessed by copy machine B via network), both arbitrarily extracted from apparatuses coupled to said network irrespective of groups grouped by said grouping section.

Regarding claim 12, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 7, further comprising: a server (server 10, fig. 24) that is coupled to said network; wherein said server includes a group information storing section to store group information including access restricting information (access information, for example, Mr. A has access to printer A, fig. 32, par. 165), serving as access restriction established between an apparatus included in a group and another apparatus included in another group, in respect to every apparatus coupled to said network.

Regarding claim 13, Idehara further teaches the system of claim 12, wherein said access restricting information also serves as access restriction established between an apparatus and another apparatus (input, output selection, fig. 52-53, also notes that copy machine A can be accessed by copy machine B via network), both arbitrarily extracted from apparatuses coupled to said network irrespective of groups grouped by said grouping section.

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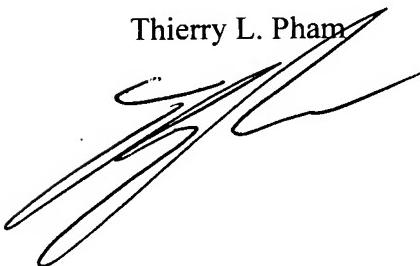
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thierry L. Pham whose telephone number is (571) 272-7439. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:30 AM - 6:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on (571)272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Thierry L. Pham

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T.L. Pham".